

UNIVERSITY OF GJAKOVA “FEHMI AGANI”
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE



DIPLOMA THESIS

BILINGUALISM AND ITS EFFECT ON EXPANDING CULTURAL BACKGROUND

MENTOR:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction.....	7
Chapter 1.....	9
1. Literature Review.....	10
1.2 Definitions of Bilingualism and Multilingualism.....	10
1.2.1 Types of bilingualism.....	11
1.3 Dimensions of Bilingualism.....	12
1.4 The Four Abilities of Bilingual and Multilingual People.....	14
1.5 Benefits of Bilingualism.....	15
1.5.1 Effects of Bilingualism on Cognitive Abilities	16
1.5.1.1 Abilities of Cognitive Development Effects	17
1.6 Advantages of Bilingualism.....	18
1.6.1 Disadvantages of Bilingualism.....	18
1.8 Bilinguals as Bicultural individuals.....	19
1.9 Bilinguals influences Attentional Processes.....	21
1.9.1 Cultural Implications on Early Attention.....	22
1.10 The Definition of Culture.....	23
1.10.1 The Relationship between Language and Culture.....	24
1.10.1.1 English Language as an International Language.....	25
1.11 Cultural Background.....	26
Chapter 2.....	27
2. Methodology.....	27
2.1 Aims of this Study.....	28
Chapter 3.....	28
3. Analysis and Results	28
3.1 The knowledge of Students about Bilingualism.....	29
3.2 When you Learn a Second language, you Learn the Culture of that Country.....	30
3.3 The Aspects of Cultural background that are mostly Improved by the Students of Kosova...31	

3.4 The Support of English Language on meeting Foreign People.....	32
3.5 Learning a Second Language has an important Role on creating a Responsible, Equal and Tolerant Society.....	33
3.6 English Language affects Cultural Identity.....	34
3.7 The Acquisition of English Language has change the opinion of students about Culture, People and Way of life.....	35
3.8 English Language has helped Students to Explore More in Internet.....	36
3.9 Brunch and Buffet have changed our eating habits.....	37
3.10 We Buy/Eat/Play just because we saw and read somewhere in English.....	37
 Chapter 4	 38
4. Conclusion and recommendations.....	38
REFERENCES.....	41
APPENDIX.....	45

INTRODUCTION

Bilingualism and multilingualism is an interdisciplinary and complex field. What one can include under the term of bilingualism and multilingualism can change from one author to another. The point on what they all agree is that of bilingualism is the use of two languages, and multilingualism is the use of two or more languages; in their everyday live. The important thing that all authors agree is that bilingualism is present in every country of the world, in all classes of society and in all age groups. Moreover, bilingualism is a phenomenon that has existed since the beginning of the language in human history. It is probably true that no language has ever existed in isolation from other languages groups. Undoubtedly, bilingualism has a lot of benefits on many aspects of human kind. Since all the benefits are mention in this paper, I will list only a few of them; people who speak more than one language fluently throughout their life have better problem solving skills, better attention, many brain deterioration issues, strong memory and the last but not the least is the great knowledge of many cultural issues they have for every language they speak.

According to Wang, being bilingual is very critical on the creation on cultural self too. A person's cultural system and autobiographical verifications are influenced and accessed differently through different languages. There has been a long discussion about the complex role of culture in language learning, so there came many confusions related to if it is possible for one to learn language without learning its cultural aspects. Even if the culture is not directly related to the culture, obviously has an important role throughout the process of language teaching and learning. Definitely, being bilingual opens many doors on different issues of life, one of them is on expanding cultural background. Cultural background of a person encompasses many aspects of society, such as socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity. Cultural background refers to the environment and surroundings in which he/she grew up in. In general is the collection of many influences in a person's life and involves much more than just geographic location. It is the combination of the person's various cultures that makes up his/her cultural background.

The paper contains information about what is important to know about native language, bilingualism and multilingualism and to what dimensions a bilingual can be analyzed. Benefits of bilingualism and the effects of bilingualism on cognitive development. The paper also contains many advantages of a bilingual in cultural aspects, the potential of them on internalizing cultures. Their ability to use the knowledge of languages on expanding cultural background.

The structure of this paper is as follows; the next section introduces definitions about native language, bilingualism and multilingualism. Dimensions of bilingualism, the language abilities of bilingual and multilingual people, continuing with the benefits and effects of bilingualism on cognitive development. Bilinguals as bicultural individuals, introducing and defining the term of culture, explaining the relationship between language and culture and a short explanation about what it is cultural background. The theoretical background of this study is followed by the research methodology and its aims. The following section discusses and lists the answers of the questionnaire that I have done with twenty-one students of different faculties in Kosovo. Finally, the paper concludes by discussing the implications of the study's findings and giving recommendations based on this research.

CHAPTER 1

1. Literature Review

1.1 Native Language and Native Speaker

Native language, first language or mother tongue is a language that a person has been exposed to from birth (Bloomfield, 1935). “In some countries, the term native language and also mother tongue refers to the language of one’s ethnic group rather than one’s first language” (Davies, 2001).

Skutnabb-Kangas defines that mother tongue can be identified through four based criteria, which are origin, competence, function and attitude. The origin deals with the language the person has learnt first which is a primarily sociological criterion. The language that a person know best and that is a linguistic criterion is called competence, while the language that the person uses the most is function which is essentially drawn from sociolinguistics. The last one is attitudes, which is the language that the person identifies itself with and the native language that other people identify the person with.

According to Andisheh Saniei, native speakers are those people who are born in a particular country and are raised to speak the language of that country on their critical period of development. As stated by Asaldo (2010) the person who is qualified as “native speaker” of a language is that person who is exposed and immersed in that language during youth, and who is born in a family which adults share a similar experience as the child.

Based on Nigel and Umberto Asaldo book, native speakers are considered to be an authority on their given language because of their natural acquisition process related to the language, as opposed to having learned the language later in life. Native speakers will not necessarily be knowledgeable about every grammatical rule of the language, but they will have good “intuition” of the rules through their experience with the language.

“The first language of a child is part of the personal, social and cultural identity” (Hirst, 2010). Another effect of the first language is that it brings about the reflection and learning of successful social patterns of acting and speaking (Boroditsky, 2001). It is responsible for differentiating the linguistic competence of acting. Whereas some argue that there is no such thing

as "native speaker" or a "mother tongue," it is necessary to understand the key terms as well as understand what it means to be a "non-native" speaker and the implications that can have on one's life. Research suggest that while a non-native speaker may progress fluency in a targeted language after about two years of immersion, it can actually take between five and seven years for that child to be on the same working level as their native speaking counterparts. This progress has implications on the education of non-native speakers.

1.2 Definitions of Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Bilingualism and Multilingualism is an interdisciplinary and complex field. As is self-evident from the prefixes (bi- and –multi), bilingualism and multilingualism phenomena are related to the study of processing, comprehension and production of two and more languages. (Bhatia, 2013)

According to Grosjean (2010:4), bilingualism is a regular use of languages rather than fluency: “bilinguals are those who use two or more languages (or dialect in their everyday lives”. Moreover, linguists and psychologists usually define bilingualism by the way the bilingual control both their languages, the bilingual’s language competence (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981: 84). However a bilingual can also be fluent in both languages without being able to function as a monolingual in either of their languages (Romaine 1995: 320). On the other hand, people are still called bilingual, since most of the once that are bilingual regularly use both languages, even if they do not have native-like competence in both languages (Byram and Brumfit, 2000).

A multilingual individual is anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be active through speaking and writing or passive through listening and reading. Multilingual people may have become what they are through different experiences and maintained a language during childhood, so-called first language, and learned other languages later in life, but a lot people acquired two of more languages since birth. So whenever two people meet, they need to decide whether they want to interact with each other and in what way. When bilingual and multilingual speakers meet, a case for consideration is which language should be used. (Mayer, 2008)

Therefore, not all bilinguals have the opportunity to use both their languages on regular basis. Where a bilingual lives in a largely monolingual community, may be a choice about the language use from day to day. However in communities where two or more languages are widely spoken,

bilingual use both their languages on a daily or frequent basis. When bilinguals have the opportunity to use both of their languages, they faced to a language choice. If the other person is already known to the bilingual, as a family member, friend or colleague, a relationship has usually been established through one language, but if both are bilingual they have the option of changing to the other language (Wei, 2008)

Francois Grosjean define that bilingualism is present in every country of the world, in all classes in society, in all age groups. In fact, is very difficult to find a country or society that is monolingual. Moreover, bilingualism is a phenomenon that has existed since the beginning of language in human history. It is probably true that no language group has ever existed in isolation from other language groups, and the history of languages is replete with many examples of languages contacts leading to some form of bilingualism. Bilingualism has also its types that help us to understand better this field.

1.2.1 Types of Bilingualism

The process of bilingualism is unique to everyone. There is great number of choices for individuals to attain a new language, worth mentioning is the experience one has while interacting with others (ASHA, 2004). According to that we have two types of bilingualism:

- 1 “Simultaneous bilingualism occurs when a young child has had significant and meaningful exposure to two languages from birth. Ideally, the child will have equal, quality experiences with both languages”.
- 2 “Sequential bilingualism occurs when an individual has had significant and meaningful exposure to a second language, usually after the age of 3 and after the first language is well established. These second language learners are referred to as "English language learners" in U.S. schools”. (ASHA, 2004)

Furthermore, to understand better the bilingualism concept, we must first know their attributes and to what dimensions they differ from other people.

1.3 Dimensions of Bilingualism

Bilinguals and multilingual can be analyzed through these dimensions (Baker, 2006):

1. The dimension of Ability	Some bilinguals speak and write in both languages (productive competence), others are more passive and have receptive ability (understanding and reading). Ability is thus on a dimension or continuum (Valdes et Al, 2003) with dominance and development varied across Speakers.
2. The dimension of Use	The contexts where each language is acquired and used are varied. An individual's different language are often used for different purposed. For example, one language is used at home and another in school.
3. The dimension of Balance between two languages	Bilinguals and multilingual are rarely equal in their ability or use of two or more languages. Often one language is dominant but this can be changed over time.
4. The dimension of Age	When children learn two languages from birth is called simultaneous or infant bilingualism (De Houwer, 2009s), but when a child learns a second language after three years age, is called consecutive or sequential bilingualism.
5. The dimension of Development	Incipient bilinguals have one well developed language and the others is in the early ages of development. When a second language is developing, this is ascendant bilingualism. Recessive bilingualism is when one language is decreasing

<p>6. The dimension of Culture</p>	<p>Bilinguals become more or less bicultural or multicultural. It is possible for someone to have high proficiency In two languages but be relatively monocultural. Bicultural competence tends to relate of knowledge of language cultures, feelings and attitudes towards two cultures.</p>
<p>7. The dimension of Contexts</p>	<p>Some bilinguals live in bilingual and multilingual endogenous communities that use more than one language on everyday basis. When there is an absence of a second language community the context is exogenous. Contexts also may be subtractive, when politics of a country favors the replacement of the home language by the majority language. Other contexts are additive, when a person learns a second language at no cost to their first language.</p>
<p>8. The dimension of Elective Bilingualism</p>	<p>Elective bilingualism is a characteristic of individuals who choose to learn a language (Valdes, 2003). They add a second language without losing their first language. Circumstantial bilinguals learn another language to function effectively because of their circumstances.</p>

1.4 The Four Language Abilities of Bilingual and Multilingual People

Bilingual and multilingual people have four basic language abilities which are: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These abilities fit into dimensions: receptive and productive skills; oracy and literacy (Baker, 2001)

	<i>Oracy</i>	<i>Literacy</i>
<i>Productive skills</i>	Speaking	Writing
<i>Receptive skills</i>	Listening	Reading

This is just a simple table of classification of who is, or is not a bilingual. Some speak a language very well, but they do not know how to write or read that language. Some listen with understanding and read a language (passive bilingualism) but do not speak or write that language, others understand that language but do not themselves speak it. To categorize people as either bilinguals or monolinguals is thus too simplistic, the two wheels of bilingualism exist on different sizes and styles. The four basic abilities do not exist in black and white terms, between them are not many shades of gray, there exist also a wide variety of colors. Each language abilities can be more or less developed. Reading ability can range from simple and basic to fluent and accomplished and someone may listen and understand that language very well in one context, but not in another context.

According to Baker, these examples show that the four abilities can be further refined into sub-scales and dimensions. So we can easily say that there are skills within skills, listed as: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, the ability to exact the meanings of different situations and variations in style. These skills tend to be viewed from an academic or classroom perspective. Using a language on the street and in a shop require a greater accent on social competence with language.

Attributes that were mentioned above help us to understand the skills that bilinguals have and what they benefit from them.

1.5 Benefits of Bilingualism

Being bilingual and learning language has great benefits on many aspects of life. People who speak more than one language fluently during their life have better problem solving skills, better attention, improved executive function and reduce the risk and severity of Alzheimer's and dementia. (Bialystok, Craik, Klein, Wiswanarhan 2004). Children who are bilingual may have some benefit in learning to read new languages due to a stronger working memory. (Swanson, 2006) Talking more than a language is exceptionally complex. Bilingualism requires a crucial reorganization of the entire language system in the brain. Having more than one language placed in the brain puts tremendous pressure on the pre-frontal cortex, which is the area of the brain who bargains with working memory and executive function.

For this reason according to Penn, 2010; brains of persons who are bilingual have a constant mental workout in this specific brain region. The result is no different than what happens when you work out any area of the body-strength and increased efficiency. If you are fluently bilingual, the areas of the brain that operate both languages are operating all the time. This is true, even if you remain in a mono-linguistic environment. For example, if you speak both Albanian and English fluently, but work in an English speaking school and live in an English speaking community so that all day long you hear and speak nothing but English, the area of your brain responsible for Albanian language is still running as you speak and listen to English. Both in areas run in pair.

The areas of dual languages are interlaced and organized by the brain region capable for the executive function. Clearly, the lexicons of the languages are shared and handled by the prefrontal cortex. This can be seen in instances of aphasia, which is the condition where languages, or parts of languages are lost, usually due to a head trauma. For example, an individual may lose the ability to speak nouns, or verbs, or even just past tenses of verbs, but when this trauma happens to a bilingual, they lose the specific grammatical class in both languages. Moreover, if you speak both French and English and can no longer say any nouns, you have lost that ability in both languages (Mozzo, 2010). I'll mention here too, that recovery is faster and more complete for this condition if you are bilingual (Penn, 2010).

According to Wang, language is also very critical in the formation of cultural self. A person's cultural system and autobiographical recounts are impacted through different languages. A research

done with bilingual children in both of their languages had different stories, memories, and personal reports based on which language was asked the question. This research has proposed that children who are bilingual should be encouraged to use, speak and read, whenever possible in both of their languages. They should be always asked on different questions that they can respond to in either language. We should all help them to celebrate their gift.

This ability to speak more than one language is manifested in best way possible just because their cognitive development is improved.

1.5.1 Effects of Bilingualism on Cognitive Abilities

A person who is grown up in a bilingual environment has a better cognitive development than others. “Bilingualism is to intelligence as food is to human fitness; this is just statement about bilingualism and intelligence, and is prescribing as a food for human survival” (Baker 1988). Bilingual children have advantages in education, due to cognitive development, divergent thought, and mental flexibility.

Cognitive ability relates to many activities, such as thinking, remembering, learning or using language. Adults who speak two languages in childhood are affected in their cognitive development. This advantage can manifest itself in several ways (Latham, 1998, 79). Gonzales suggests that bilingual children naturally develop cognitive representation verbally, non-verbally, and symbolically. Actually, bilingual students surpass monolingual students on many intelligence tests. Language fluency is determined by listening, speaking and reading abilities (Rosenberg 1996).

According to a study conducted by Ellen Bialystok, whom monolingual and bilingual children were set to play a game, the conclusion in the end was as it was expected. Single language children are less effective at solving problem, which contains distracting, but appropriate information. Bilingual children demonstrated a superiority in the cognitive function of analysis and control. According also to the Bialystok’s research, this superiority is expected to continue because of the representative function as awareness and inhibition is needed to solve the problem.

1.5.1.1 Abilities of Cognitive Development Effects

1. Executive functioning of cognitive development permits an internal prioritizing of a valuable information for the recovery at a later time. A woman would be incapable to arrange and structure her day at the office and would not be able to do nothing amid the day without this capacity. Executive functioning is important device in regard of learning and cognition (Bialystok, 2002). Bialystok considers that the development of executive functioning is affected by the bilingual ability. Latham moreover concurs that bilingualism is conducive to development and executive functioning leads to mastery of metalinguistic awareness.

2. Metalinguistic awareness is also reinforced by bilingual ability. This awareness permits an individual to relate different sources of information in language and permits them to apply to other areas of thought that help in problem solving ability. Metalinguistic awareness is a resource in word recognition, and furthermore it impacts intelligence development. With other words, this awareness is a key contributor to divergent thinking, as well as to creativity and the ability to speak freely. It has been supported by many years of research that bilingual subject is way superior to monolinguals in the area of divergent thinking.

3. Baker states that divergent thinking with other words is creativity, the ability to think and to maintain an open mind in respect to the acquisition of knowledge. Since the children illustrated the ability to process the information in a way that finished the task asked for them. Divergent thinking is demonstrated in different tests that prime to the conclusion that the bilingual children continuously give diverse, valid and varied answers. (Baker, 1988). Divergent thinking is based in the acquisition of a varied knowledge base (Felhusen, 2002).

3. Divergent thinking is creativity, imagination and of course the ability to think and to maintain an open mind in respect to the acquisition of knowledge (Baker, 1988). Since the children demonstrated the ability to process the information in a way that accomplished the task asked for them. Divergent thinking is demonstrated in different tests that prime to the conclusion that the bilingual children always give diverse solutions. Due to the divergent thought and the creative imagination, bilinguals gave more varied and valid answers (Baker, 1988). Creative or divergent thinking is based in the acquisition of a varied knowledge base (Felhusen, 2002).

This study cannot be fully completed without discussing the advantages and disadvantages of bilinguals.

1.6 Advantages of Bilingualism

Bilingualism gives individuals a great number of advantages such as mental flexibility, concept superiority, information diversity and higher verbal IQ ability. People who are bilinguals have also superiority on creative thinking. This ability gives bilingual children rise to control over problems of nonverbal nature due to diversified skill sets at work. Moreover, the problem solving process is different from others used earlier at youth age by children who only have a single language knowledge base. According to this priority that have, bilingual children are more likely to show themselves without the constraints of symbols. When a child must learn their literacy skills in two languages simultaneously the advantage of bilingualism may be lost. Children must find the connection between written code and sound, as well as sound to written code (Estes, 2002). Bearnardo agrees and purposes the use of words issues in dominant languages for the acquisition of math knowledge. Hence, we can say that advantage of bilingual children is that they can learn second language quickly as compare to the adults.

1.7 Disadvantages of Bilingualism

As every issue that has the positive and the negative side, the bilingualism has the advantages and disadvantages also. We said that bilingualism has many advantages on mental flexibility, divergent thinking and many others things. But, once upon a time bilingualism was considered very harmful to one's verbal development and IQ. Since then, we conducted numerous research studies that point the problems involved in bilingualism. Ellen Bialystok's study pointed out that the brain of a bilingual person which has two constantly active languages and who involve an additional processing cost, it might lead to verbal skills of a bilingual person to be weaker than those who are monolingual speakers of the language. Another study who show that bilinguals know fewer words of any semantic category in comparison to people that speak fluently only one language- their vocabularies seems to be somewhat smaller (Gollan, T. H., Montoya, R. I., & Werner, G. A, 2002).

Bilinguals must continuously follow to a dual restriction. While monolinguals may produce any word that comes to mind as long as it meets requires category-membership restriction, bilinguals may need first to verify each word belongs to the second target language. To be exact, words from the non-target language may come to mind clearly during language-selective tasks, thereby placing greater cognitive demands on bilinguals relative to monolinguals. It could thus be argued that semantic and letter categories may be as difficult for bilinguals as are categories that require monolinguals to follow two restrictions (rather than just one). For example, Azuma et al. (1997) asked monolinguals to produce proper names beginning with a particular letter (e.g., Melissa, Michael, Mandy, Morton, etc.). Interestingly, these categories resulted in lower scores than any of the other categories that had only one inclusion restriction. If target language should be considered as a second restriction, then bilinguals would be expected to produce fewer exemplars than monolinguals for this reason alone. Although using one language only may be easier than the combined phonemic and semantic restrictions of the proper name fluency task (which produced a very dramatic effect), the language restriction may nevertheless also have an effect (Gollan, T. H., Montoya, R. I., Werner, Grace A, 2002).

However, if there are costs to be paid for being bilingual, the many advantages of it are really worthy. The parents of children who are part of a bilingual environment should not be worry just because their brains are under development and will quickly adjust to a new linguistic environment. Above all, bilingualism is something that will help to lead richer liver and develop understanding towards different cultures (T. Myler, 2017).

1.8 Bilinguals as Bicultural individuals

Bilinguals tend to be bicultural (LaFromboise, 1993). Bicultural individuals are those who have two adopted cultures that guide their feelings, thoughts and actions (Hong et al., 2000; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). One clarification for the language dependent changes observed in bilingual's personalities is that these individual experience in a cultural frame switching while switching from one language to another. Previous research has provided some support for the idea that language can lead bilinguals' responses to surveys (Bond & Yang, 1982; Ralston et al., 1995; Yang & Bond, 1980). In a research study, Chinese bilinguals have responded

to a questionnaire in English endorsed more values and norms related with the English-speaking world than did Chinese bilinguals who responded to the same questionnaire in Chinese (Bond & Yang, 1982). Such effects have been explained in terms of cultural accommodation (Bond & Yang, 1982). Cultural accommodation is viewed when bilinguals respond to situations (e.g., when completing a questionnaire) in a manner that accommodates or favors the culture associated with the language they are currently using. This is because the language itself primes the bilinguals' culture-specific values, attitudes, and memories, which in turn affect that behavior (e.g., their responses to a questionnaire). Hence, when bilinguals answer an instrument in their native language their responses will reflect the values and attitudes associated with that language. When they respond to a questionnaire in their second language, they may favor norms and values associated with that language.

Nairán Ramírez-Esparza, Samuel D. Gosling, Verónica Benet-Martínez, Jeffrey P. Potter, James W. Pennebaker have collected in one article different researches on cultural frame switching (CFS) that show that bilinguals display values and attitudes when responding to a questionnaire in different languages. Moreover, is not clear whether CFS occurs in personality traits. For this to happen, language would have to be strong cue to activate a response and personality would have to be flexible to shift in response to the cues.

More indication that language is related to personality was done by a study using the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) in Spanish–English bilinguals (Hull, 1996). The results showed some support for the CFS effect. For example, bilinguals' scores in the Good Impression factor were higher in Spanish than in English. Hull (1996) conjectured that bilinguals showed this propensity because in the Spanish speaking culture, like in other collectivist cultures, there is greater concern about interpersonal harmony and pleasing others (Marín & Marín, 1991), and also because group association is valued more strongly (Shkodriani & Gibbons, 1995). Furthermore, bilinguals showed more Intellectual Efficiency when responding in English rather than in Spanish. Hull argues that this finding results from the widespread belief that the American–English culture, at the pinnacle of individualistic culture, emphasizes more achievement aspirations than does Spanish-speaking culture (Díaz-Guerrero & Szalay, 1991; Madsen & Kagan, 1973). Although Hull's study (1996) also offers some support for CFS, it too suffers from a number of limitations. Initially, as Hull agrees upon, the CPI has been criticized as lacking a factorial foundation and, as

in Ervin's study, no clear comparative evidence is provided regarding CPI differences between monolinguals who speak either English or Spanish. Finally, as in Ervin's study, the findings have not been replicated in multiple samples.

Bilinguals that have to deal everyday with new words automatically deal with the origin of words that make them understand the culture and the history of that language.

1.9 Bilingualism influences Attentional Processes

A great body of literature proposes that bilingualism influences attentional processes among a variety of age groups. Lately studies, however indicate that culture may also have measurable effects on attentional processes. Bilinguals are exposed to multiple cultural background and for that reason, it is unclear if being exposed to multiple language and cultures together influence attentional processes, or if the effect themselves are connected to different attentional processes. A study held on U.S, Argentina and Vietnam explores the relevancy of different attentional processes as: alerting, orienting and executive control to language and to culture. In this study were analyzed 97 children, 3 years old, who were bilingual and monolingual children. Results of this research demonstrate that when other factors are controlled (socio-economic status, vocabulary knowledge, age) culture plays an important role on the development of the alerting and executive control attentional network, and language was only significant on the executive control attentional network. This study indicates that culture may interact with bilingualism to further explain previous reported advantages, as well as elucidate the increasing disparity surrounding cognitive advantages in bilingual literature (D. Tran, M. Arredondo, & Yoshida, 2014)

Bilingual learners through exposure and constant use of multiple languages are asked to make fast and adaptive changes from context-to-context, and this constant shifting and controlling one's attention to the relevant language has been found to have measurable effects on attentional control (Bialystok, et al., 1999). This effect has been referred as part of the bilingual cognitive advantages (Kroll & Bialystok, 2013). The present study focuses on one factor, individuals' cultural background has been related to attentional processing and control but yet this cultural influence has not been systematically addressed in the framework of bilingual cognitive advantage (Oh & Lewis, 2008).

1.9.1 Cultural Implications on Early Attention

Bilinguals come from different environments influenced by various factors include family and cultural values, immigration status and linguistic background (Oh and Lewis, 2008; Bialystok and Viswanathan, 2009; Barac and Bialystok, 2012). The present focus on the role of cultural background is inspired by increasing studies proposing how culture plays an important role in attention (Varnum et al., 2009) and how individuals notice and to be present to visual cues and stimulation. An Eastern cultural advantage, recently was found over Western cultures on children's performance on overall attention, as measured by the ANT (Yang et al., 2011; Yang, unpublished). This advantage is considered to be the result of child-rearing values specific to Eastern cultural practices (Oh and Lewis, 2008). Distinctions between Eastern and Western cultures have been characterized and accepted based on the structural degree of these societies as they differ on people's goals, needs, collectivism, and individualism (Triandis, 1994, 1995). Eastern (or collectivistic) cultures place emphasis on obedience to authority figures, interdependence and early maintenance of self-regulation/impulse control, strict academic training, and less on play (Oh and Lewis, e.al. 2008). Recent works using different measures of attentional flexibility suggest that parental rearing and formal instructional practices appear to influence the development of attention differently among children from Eastern and Western cultures (Oh and Lewis, 2008; Yang et al., 2011). Another study has suggested that the cultural effect performs similarly to the bilingual advantage effect in attention (Yang et al., 2011). In this study, a Korean advantage between two monolingual groups (Korean- and English-speaking 3.5-years-old children) was demonstrated on the ANT, suggesting the potential role of culture on general attentional control. This Korean advantage has been explained by the Eastern cultural practices and values on collectivism and parenting attitudes (Chao and Tseng, 2002).

Furthermore, to cultural advantages in attentional control, there are a number of studies reporting connections between cultural differences in processing visual attention (Varnum et al., 2009). In particular, adults in Western cultures were shown to reveal more focused attention, whereas adults in Eastern cultures demonstrated broader and more distributed attention. Adults who participated in attentional and perceptual tasks, those in Western cultures (i.e., the U.S.) tend to narrowly process visual information to individual target objects that is less dependent on surrounding features, while those in Eastern cultures (i.e., Japan) broadly process information dependent on the

surrounding contexts. This cross-cultural phenomenon has often been meaningful to the individualistic and collectivistic societal structure frequently adopted in Western and Eastern cultures, respectively (Varnum et al., 2009). Individualistic cultures here tend to orient around the self, on the other hand collectivistic cultures value working in groups and are reliant to those around (Rothwell, 2010). Specific to the present hypothesis, differences in processing visual attention (i.e., focused vs. distributed attention) may therefore play a differential role on different attentional processes (alerting, orienting, executive control). The present study considered task performances on attentional processes of children whose cultural backgrounds are differently associated on the Eastern–Western culture continuum and language backgrounds (e.g., monolingual vs. bilingual), in order to address the specificity of cultural and language effects on attention,

1.10 The definition of Culture

We definitely deal everyday with the word culture, but we never thought what exactly culture is. Of course, the term culture has many definitions. According to Merriam Webster dictionary the culture is “the act of developing the intellectual and moral facilities especially by education”, “the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. Another definitions that may have a broad meaning is that culture is the acquaintance with and taste in fine arts, humanities, and broad aspects of science as distinguished from vocational and technical skills; a person of culture.

According to Kim Ann Zimmermann, the culture is a characteristic and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

The Center for Advance Research on Language Acquisition goes a step further, defining culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Therefore, culture can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group.

"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we

behave with loved ones, and a million other things," Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, told Live Science.

Culture is what make countries unique, each country has completely diverse activities and rituals. "Culture is the belief and the value of people of that culture, it also includes the way of what people think and understand the world they are living" (Choudhury, 2014).

Culture forms a context of cognitive and affective behavior for each person. It influences individual estimation and attitudes, and can also have an effect on practical aspects of life such as hobbies. People begin with usual actions and go on to create common stereotypes. The cultural stereotypes affect how people think, speak, act, and interact with one another. Culture and communication are attached to each other because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, but also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted. In a word, culture is the foundation of communication (Zhou, ZH, 2017)

1.10.1 The Relationship Between Language and Culture

There has been a long and wide discussion about the complex role of culture in language learning, there came many questions related to this. It is possible for one to learn language without learning its cultural aspects? Does teaching culture simply mean introducing some elements of surface culture such as customs, food or festivals, or does it mean raising the awareness of students towards the deeper culture such as beliefs, values and norms of which are manifested in people's behavior? Which culture should be chosen to be representative of the culture for the language?

Yuri Camagai in his article explained that culture is not directly related to the language but obviously has an important role throughout the process of language teaching and learning. The dilemma is not whether or not to teach culture but rather what kind of teaching of culture would motivate students to understand the nature of language, communication and human relations.

Another difficulty in teaching language from a cultural perspective is that there is a clear dichotomy between native and non-native speakers of the language. One must decide how much, the non-native speakers should observe to the native speaker norm of language use or patterns of communication (Bentahila & Davies, 1989). It is important to bear this in mind given the reality of English as an international language. It is known that second or foreign language speakers of English have already acquired communicative competence in their first language and culture. This competence sometimes is viewed in a negative light since it interferes with the person's competence by transferring the first language competence to English and causes misunderstandings. The comparison of languages and cultures for the purpose of identifying and describing problems that second-language learners will encounter (Lado, 1957). His assumption is that individuals transfer forms and meanings, and the distribution of these, from their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture. As a result, there occurs miscommunication between people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. According to this, miscommunication is minimized by maximizing conformity. "To know English, you must be able to communicate in the language in a manner that native speakers will accept as their own" (Ibid, 1957). This observation excludes the validity of the non-native speaker's cultural background. Conquering one's own cultural identity may not appear to be so traumatic, yet because the values of the English language clash with the values of one's own native language, the nonnative speaker may feel compromised. The largest number of people who are bilinguals speak English, which make this language the most wide spread language in the world.

1.10.1.1 English as an International Language

We can deny that English today has established its present status as international language and it is very hard to deny the reality of its dominance today. This came not just because the English language is superior to other languages but because it medium for science, technology and literature.

English teaching, previously, has been classified as "English as a Foreign Language" and as "English as a Second language", but today English language is becoming the most used language in the whole world with over six hundred million users, whom about half are non-native speakers of English (Kachru, 1984). Another study shows that there are about two billion people who have

capability in English (Crystal, 1985). As a result, the native speakers of English may well come to be outnumbered by non-native speakers. To conclude, the non-native speakers it is likely to communicate with each other in English as their common language.

The new role of English language today has led to the philosophy of English as an International Language (EIL) which was encouraged in order to emphasize the function of English for cross-cultural and cross-national understanding. The main premise of English as International Language is that “the use of English is always culture bound but the English language is not bound to any specific culture or political system” (Baxter, 1980). The English as International Language argument is that the learners must be given basic skills for communicating with any potential interlocutors, of whatever national, linguistic, or cultural background. This approach has taken English Language teaching closer to the integration of intercultural training. The goal is of course, to teach members of one culture to interact through English members of other cultures with minimal misunderstanding. So, the acquisition of English language obviously has expand the knowledge of people cultural background. People are choosing English language as a language of the world without knowing that this language is becoming powerful and the language of world. So, nowadays, almost everyone is bilingual, some as passive bilinguals and others as active bilinguals just because the evolution that English language has had through this time.

1.11 Cultural background

A person’s cultural background refers to the environment and surroundings in which he/she grew up in. It is the collection of influences in a person’s life and involves much more than just geographic location.

Cultural background encompasses many aspects of society, such as socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity. Other factors that contribute to an individual's cultural background include gender, age, religion, traditions, language and hobbies. A person can belong to several cultural groups. For example, the person could be Asian, elderly, Christian and vegetarian at the same time. It is the combination of the person's various cultures that makes up his/her cultural background¹.

¹ <https://www.reference.com/world-view/meaning-cultural-background-df83f994fe528afa>

Petrakis and Kostis (2013) divide cultural background variables into two main groups:

1. “The first group covers the variables that represent the "efficiency orientation" of the societies: performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, power distance and uncertainty avoidance”.
2. “The second covers the variables that represent the "social orientation" of societies, i.e., the attitudes and lifestyles of their members. These variables include gender egalitarianism, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism and human orientation.”

CHAPTER 2

2. Methodology

In this research the effects of bilingualism on expanding cultural background are analyzed. I decided to use the quantitative method. This questionnaire was distributed to twenty-one students of varying age with different educational and social background. My respondents were mainly from University of Gjakova and some from University of Peja.

These students were all good in the acquisition of English language that helped me to distribute the questionnaire without the need of translation. The questionnaire comprises ten questions about the knowledge of students of how English language has helped them to expand their cultural background; focusing more on different aspects of cultural background as food, traditions, music, theater, and how this language helped them to meet foreign people. The questionnaire is more qualitative than quantitative, and I used to put there more closed versions of questions. To be mentioned, seventeen students out of twenty one knew exactly what means bilingualism, which means that almost everyone has information and learned about it in school. The reason why I chose to put two opened questions was because I wanted to know the knowledge of students about bilingualism as term and to know about their opinion if learning a new language helps to learn somehow the culture of that country in specific.

Research questions:

This research is primarily aimed at answering these questions:

1. Which aspects of cultural background are improved mostly by the acquisition of English language?
2. Does English language impact students of Kosova to meet foreign people?
3. Do students of university of Gjakova and Peja know what means bilingualism?

Research Hypothesis:

Being bilingual helps students of Kosova to expand their cultural background.

2.1 Aims of this study

The main aim of this study is to examine the effects of bilingualism on expanding cultural background. Alongside with that comes also the increase of awareness of benefits and advantages that has bilingualism on many different cultural aspects as sociality, hobbies, tradition, religion ethnicity and many other aspects, all the collection of influences that make our cultural background. One of other aims of this paper is to make clear that English language (as this language is making students bilingual) has the chance to change the students' cultural identity by giving them the opportunity to search on internet on different issues.

CHAPTER 3

3. Analysis and Results

In this section are portrayed the analysis of students' responses and all the data collected together that brought me to the conclusions below. Every research questions is discussed according to the responses of the students.

3.1 The knowledge of Students about Bilingualism

According to this questionnaire, to know first the knowledge of the students about bilingualism I have put an open question. Out of twenty one students that were conducted to fulfill the questionnaire, only eighteen have answered to this question. In general, everyone has heard the term of bilingualism but they never thought that they are part of a bilingual group.

18 responses

10 participants	Bilingualism occurs when an individual speaks/talk/write two languages.
3 participants	Bilingualism means knowing one or more foreign languages.
2 participants	Bilingualism is when you use and know two languages.
1 participant	The term Bilingualism refers to the situation when a person has acquired two different languages.
1 participant	Bilingualism is a term about language, and refers to the phenomenon when a child grows up learning two languages, like countries of Belgium and Swiss, who have two official languages.

Table 1. The knowledge about bilingualism

As we can see the students responses, we can easily say that every student know what means bilingualism in general. Even though they have interpreted different from each other, in context they all agree that bilingualism is a term that refers to the individual who speaks/talks/writes two languages. Despite the fact that they all know this term, the advantages that bilingualism has given

them to life is beyond expectations. Indeed, they have advanced more than think because being bilingual has brought them to cognitive development and have made them more flexible to adopt in new environments.

3.2 When you learn a second language, you learn the culture of that country

In this question out of twenty one participants, only nineteen have answered this question.

Participants	Answers
<p>17 participants – YES</p>	<p>Some agree that when you learn a language, you learn the culture also just because the language is a cultural part of that place</p> <p>When you learn a language, to fully adopt with that place, you should learn the culture too.</p> <p>Different meetings with people lead to face with country's culture</p> <p>When one learns a second language, he/she is more willing to learn about country's literature, poetry, movies, music, and other aspects of it.</p> <p>When we learn a second language, we are involved in another dimension of expression and that makes us feel interest for its roots.</p>

2 participants – NO	When we learn a language we do not learn the culture of that country.
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Table 2. A language helps to learn the culture of a particular country

The results of this Table 2 indicate that the participants agree on the importance that a language has on learning a culture of a country. The language helps to increase information about different concerns such as history, literature, poetry, music. Through the specific language that makes us bilingual we can see the world through the eyes of another country and gives us an insight into how its culture differs from our own.

3.3 The Aspects of Cultural Background that are mostly improved by the Students of Kosova

In order to understand better the students’ knowledge about how English language (as this language made the chosen students bilinguals) has helped them to expand cultural background, I have listed five answers. Those students have been asked to fulfill the answer that they think it helped to expand different cultural aspects. The answers below were : Traditions of other countries, music/movies/theater, reading worldwide authors in English, being more open minded with any race, religion or gender equality and financial aspects.

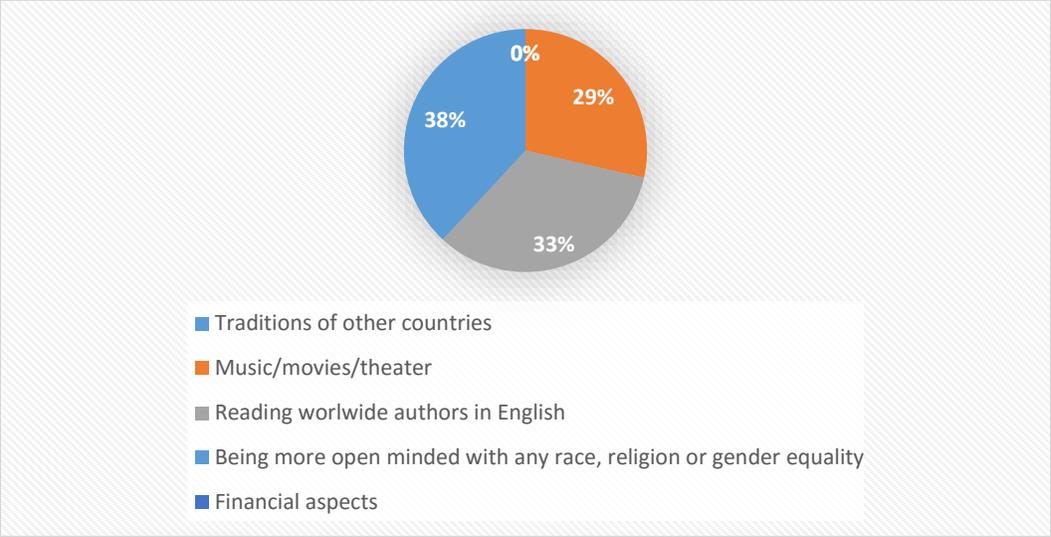


Fig.4 Cultural aspects mostly improved by the acquisition of English language

The responses were like this: 38% think that the acquisition of English language has developed the feeling of being more open minded with any race, religion or gender equality, just because this language gave them the opportunity to be in touch through communication with any race, religion and gender. 33% think that English helped them to read worldwide authors and 28% think that through music, movies and theater they learned English language. And almost none has fulfill the answer of financial aspect and traditions of other countries which means that those cultural aspects were not improved by learning English.

3.4 The Support of English Language on meeting Foreign People

The students that were requested to fulfill this questionnaire were mostly agreed with the question. Out 100%, the largest percentage think that the acquisition of English is very beneficial.

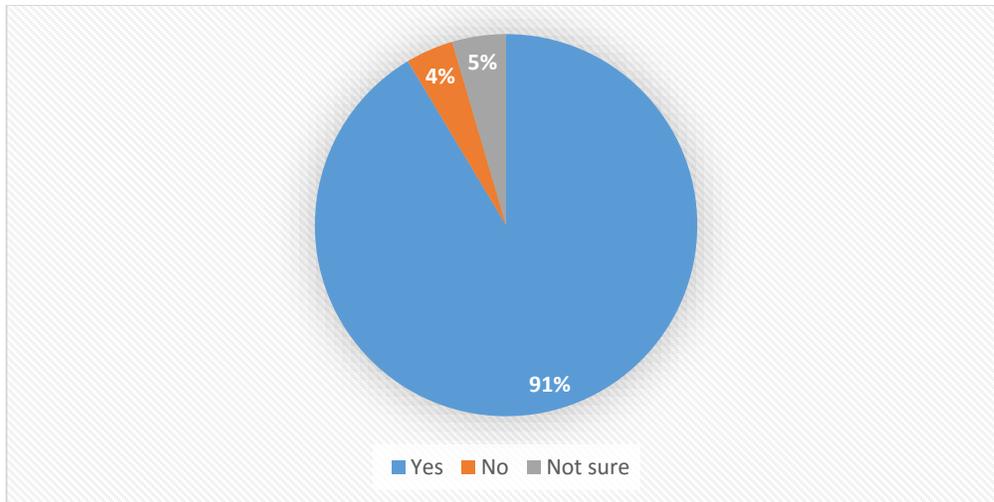


Fig.2 The support of English language on meeting Foreign People

English Language has had a key role on opening doors to meet foreign people. Meeting new people has helped 91 % participants to expand their knowledge on different cultural aspects. They think that this connection has assisted them to learn about their habits, cultures, food, tradition and this contributed to expand their diapason. Only 9% of participants think that English did not have any influence on opening doors of meeting people. Being in touch with this connection has made students very dependent to English language. They think that being bilingual has had positive effect on their life.

3.5 Learning a second language has an important role on creating a responsible, equal and tolerant society

All the participants have answered the question if learning a second has an importance on creating responsible, equal and tolerant society.

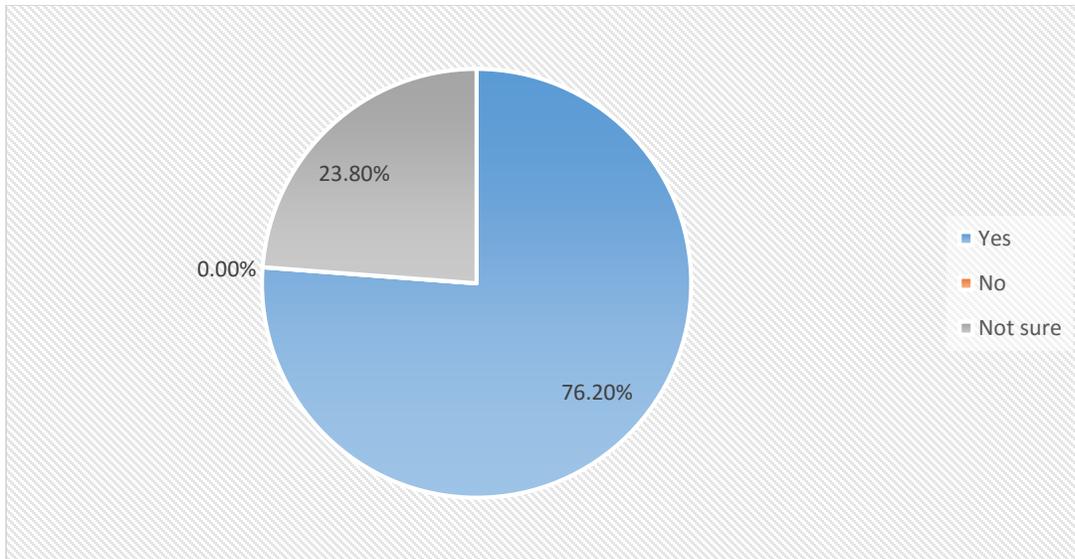


Fig. 5 Learning a second language has an important role on creating a responsible, equal and tolerant society

According to the results of the Fig. 5, 76.20% agree that learning a second language creates a responsible, equal and tolerant society, 23.80% agree that they are not sure about it. Being bilingual language impacts our everyday live for the reason of when they switch to a second language they have different behavior and gestures, therefore it makes them more tolerant and responsible for all actions they do.

3.6 English language affects cultural identity

Depending on the participant responses English language affects cultural identity, just because they find it as motivation to open many opportunities. The acquisition of a second language, such as English language may made them to be part of a higher social class, to gain a better income and to escape the native culture.

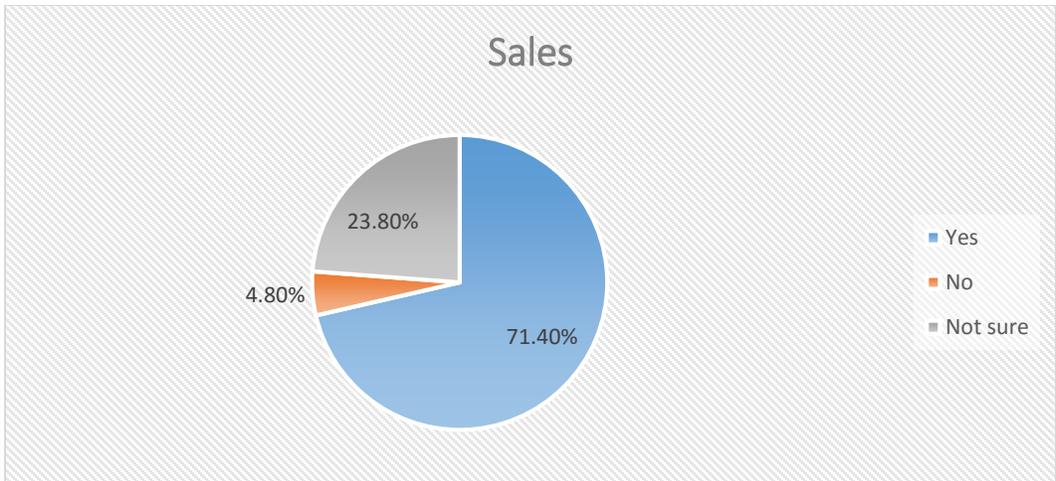


Fig. 6 English affects our cultural identity

This analysis evidences that participants have not hesitated to answer the questionnaire because they see English language as the only hope to explore and to be part of the world. They realize that English language has helped to expand their cultural background just because they have the opportunity to be part of different societies, with all the aspects that come with it.

3.7 The acquisition of English language has change the opinion of students about culture, people and way of life

The responses conducted to this question were all positive.

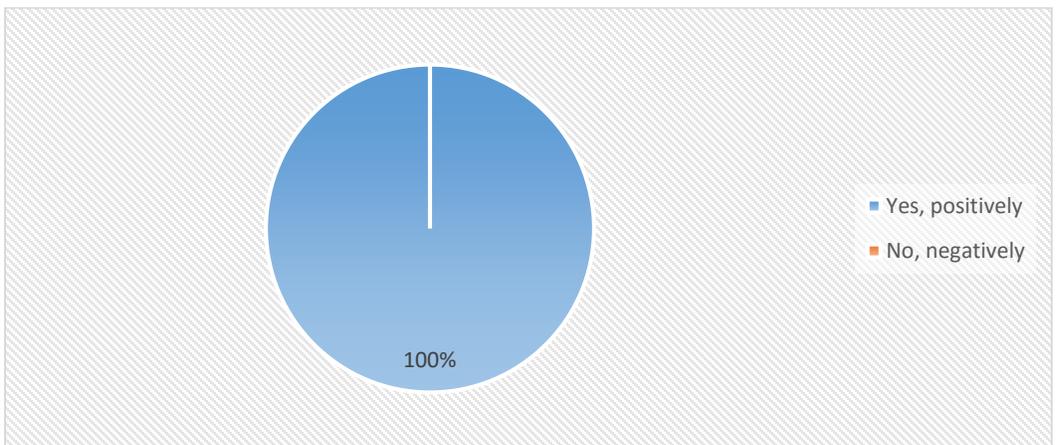


Fig.7 The acquisition of English language has the opinion of students about culture, people and way of life

As it is showed in the fig. 7, responses lead were 100% yes positively. The acquisition of English language gives students willingness to learn it, because it will put them to be in touch with more people than any other languages. It also gives the greatest chance to search on internet for cultures purposes such as books. Some of students said that English languages give them the chance to be more open minded for the surrounding environment they live.

3.8 English language has helped students to explore more in internet

Related to the internet a crucial element to explore on it is the acquisition of English language. Therefore the students conducted agree that this language pulled them to explore on different issues on internet.

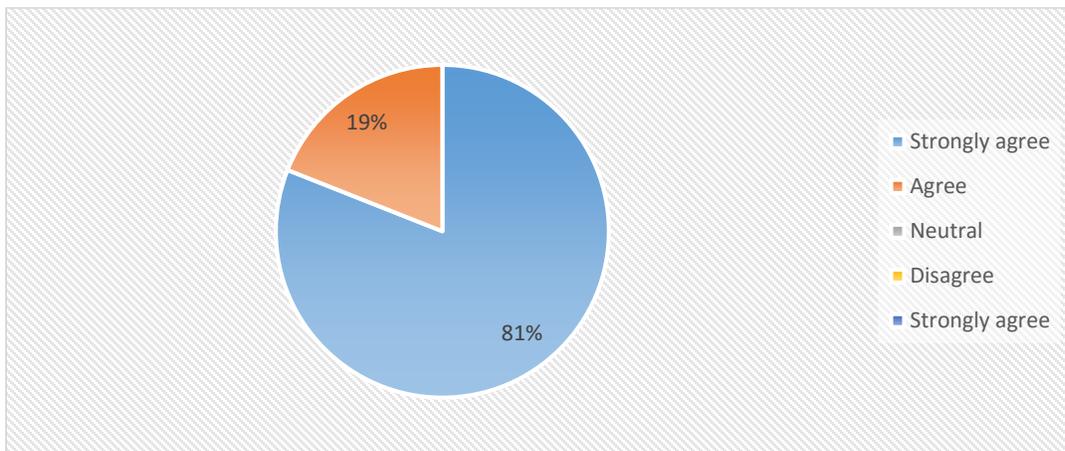


Fig. 8 English language has helped students to explore more in internet

The results of this question were like this: 81% strongly agree that English languages helped them to explore more in internet and 19% agree with this statement. So we can easily say that a huge role on success depends on this language. While accessing to current books or articles may not be easy in their native language, the access in English gives them the chance to find what they want on their topic. One of the biggest achievement of using internet is that this can help you understand the culture of another country while watching news, sports, popular TV shows.

3.9 Brunch and Buffet (breakfast and lunch in England) have changed our eating habits

Based on how much my students were depended in English language, I thought that this cultural aspects were impacted also.

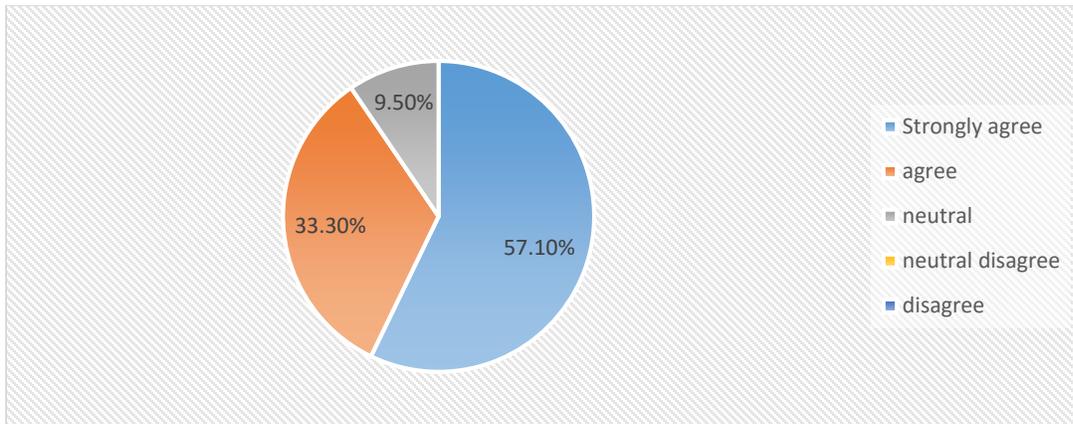


Fig.9 Our eating habits

Responses were like this: 57.1% disagree, 33.3% agree on this fact while 9.5% were neutral. According to that we see a little dependence on the way the people live in England.

3.10 We buy/eat/play just because we saw and read somewhere in English

Same as the previous question, I saw logical to ask students if they were dependent on English on buying, eating something as well as playing a game for the reason that they saw and read somewhere in an English magazine or article.

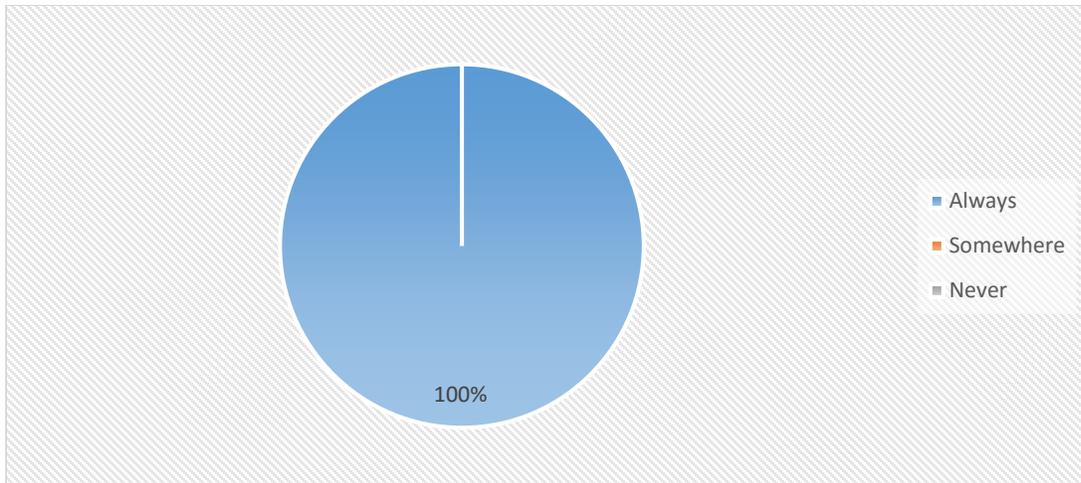


Fig. 10 English dependence on eating, buying something and playing

I listed three options to answer, and 100% said that they sometimes feel attracted on what they see on magazines and bought it immediately. Some said that they sometimes felt attracted to play rugby and others to eat omelet.

Based on the results, I see a huge effect of being bilingual on expanding cultural background. And bases on the research hypothesis we can say that yes, being bilingual helps students of Kosova to expand their diapason on different cultural aspects. Somehow, everything that surrounds them, starting with learning the history of a particular country, changing their behavior while they switch on English language, meeting foreign people and learning through them their habits, tradition, culture as well as the impact of English on searching in internet, expands cultural background of my participants.

CHAPTER 4

1. Conclusion and recommendations

Being bilingual has brought a new dimension to the language. We are living in that time where access to new languages is very easy and being bilingual or multilingual is not hard anymore. As shown by the participant of this study, bilingualism nowadays is wide known term and everyone thinks that is one way or another we all have benefits from it. Some of the benefits of bilingualism

are that people have better problem solving skills, better attention, many brain deterioration issues, strong memories and a great knowledge of many cultural aspects for every language they speak which leads to a great diapason. Therefore bilinguals tend to be bicultural (LaFromboise, 1993). One potential explanations for the language dependent changes in bilinguals' personalities is that these individuals undergo in a cultural frame switching from one language to another. Further studies suggested that to know a language, e.g. English language, you must be able to communicate in the language in a manner that native speakers will accept as their own (Ibid, 1957). This view completely excludes the validity of the non-native speaker's cultural background. However, English language is becoming the most powerful language as "English as Foreign language" and as "English as a second Language" and this language is making somehow every person bilingual.

Based on the results that I have analyzed being bilingual gives students the aptitude to learn new cultures. English language has developed to them the feeling of being more open minded with any race and religion, just because this language gave them the opportunity to be worldwide informed with different materials and to be part of cultural diversity. Speaking another languages lets you interact with different people and understand the nuances of another culture. This means you might have more opportunities to make friends, explore different hobbies and better understand your favorite foreign music, film and literature. Travel can also be cheaper and more rewarding when you speak the language of the country you're visiting. All this lead to the conclusion that learning a second language comes alongside with reading articles, books or watching movies, contacting native speakers, etc. and all these offer you the chance to learn about their culture. The fact itself which pushed you to learn that language will increase your curiosity about their culture as well.

According to my study, acquisition of English language can help my student to see the world in different way and understand their selves better. Students who regularly speak a second language perceive differences in color variations that are not recognized by monolinguals. This happens because while speaking another language student's character emphasize to different behavior. In conclusion I would say that except all the benefits on cognitive development, teaching a second language help everyone expand their cultural background. People who are bilingual led to a greater advantage in many aspects differ from others who are monolingual.

According to the participants of this study, I saw a great a potential of them to learn new languages. Therefore I strongly recommend learning a second language, or more than two: Some of the reasons are:

The sooner you learn the more frequently you use your second language, the greater benefits will be. There are numerous benefits from speaking a new language, from professional and personal to health benefits.

I would recommend to the students that they should read and learn more about the culture of that country whose language they are learning meanwhile because it would increase and help their understanding the language itself.

Being bilingual also increase curiosity to learn different cultural aspects, as food tradition, gender equality, habits. Based on the results, I suggest students to use English language to benefit more on their professional carrier, and to use the acquisition of English language for improvement on others languages.

Be part of many more language groups, this will help you be part somehow of the world and to learn different languages quickly.

For the end, I would suggest more investigation relating to this topic. I found many books and articles about how beneficial is being bilingual, moreover the effects of bilingualism on expanding cultural background were a few, or to be honest there were none.

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APPENDIX:

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear students: The objective of this questionnaire is to know your knowledge of how English Language (as this language makes you bilingual) has helped you to expand your cultural background.

Cultural background encompasses many aspects of society, as tradition, hobbies, ethnicity, religion, and many cultural groups. It is the combination of the person's various cultures that makes up his/her cultural background.

Thank you for your corporation.

1. What do you understand with bilingualism?

2. Do you think that when you learn a second language you learn the culture of that country?

Yes, why _____

No, why _____

3. Circle an instance of any cultural aspect that English language has helped you to improve?

- a. Traditions of other countries
- b. Music/movies/theater
- c. Reading worldwide authors in English
- d. Being more open-minded with any race, religion or gender equality
- e. Financial aspects

4. Do you think that understanding English language will open your doors on meeting people?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

5. Do you think that English Language has an important role on creating a responsible, equal and tolerant society?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

6. Do you think that learning English has affected your cultural identity?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

How? _____

7. Would you say that acquisition of English Language has changed you opinion about the people, and the way of life?

YES, Positively

NO, negatively

8. Do you think that understanding English has helped you to explore more in internet?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

9. Do you think that brunch and buffet (breakfast and lunch in England) have changed our eating habits?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral disagree

Strongly disagree

10. How often do you buy/eat/play just because you saw and read somewhere in English?

Sometimes

Always

Never